

## REMARKS

The present Preliminary Amendment is submitted with the Continuation Application enclosed herewith. The Continuation Application is based on and claims the benefit of U.S. Patent Application No.: 09/667,151, filed September 21, 2000, which, in turn, is based on Provisional Application No.: 60/155,866, filed on September 24, 1999. The amendments contained in this Preliminary Amendment should be considered prior to calculating the filing fee.

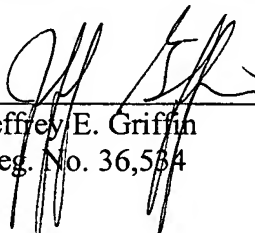
In the parent patent application (09/667,151), claims 31-37 were allowed. Accordingly, those claims have been canceled. Additionally, claims 1-5, 9, 14, 19-22, 38, 40 and 49-53 have been amended, claims 6-8, 10-13, 15-16 and 23-30 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 1-5, 9, 14, 17-22 and 38-53 remain pending in this Continuation Application.

All claim amendments are fully supported throughout the specification and figures. For example, the Examiner's attention is directed to pages 14-20 and page 29 of the specification and the associated figures. However, support for the claims as well as the current claim amendments is provided throughout the specification. No new matter has been added.

The pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the Examiner wishes to resolve other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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